COMMENTARY

on

the Statement made by the Right Honorable,
John Foster Dulles,
United States Secretary of State,

by

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The United States Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, after a long silence of two and a half years since his visit to the Middle East, made a Statement before the Council on Foreign Relations on the steps to be taken towards bringing about stability, tranquility and progress in the Middle East.

Secretary Dulles thinks that the political tension in the Middle East has relaxed since his last visit. The settlement of the Suez canal problem in a conciliatory spirit between Great Britain and Egypt, and the repeated endeavors on the part of Ambassador Eric Johnston to coordinate Arab Israeli efforts in the development of the Jordan River Watershed are given as an indication of this improvement which, the Secretary of State believes, warrants another attempt on the part of the U.S.A. and other nations to end the long strife between the Arabs and the Israelis.

After making a thorough and an objective study of Secretary Dulles' Statement, we Palestine Arab refugees regret to say that the proposals suggested by the Secretary of State fall very short of bringing about real peace in the area and seem to us unworkable. It may, however, be wise or even necessary for the Arabs to discuss the Statement with Secretary Dulles himself to convince him of their point of view.

Dealing with the long standing complicated problem of Palestine, Secretary Dulles has suggested for treatment, palliative measures, overlooking the malignant disease which is already deep rooted and which has, for so long, been destroying all cultural and religious traditions of the region and which has made of Palestine a battlefield.

Secretary Dulles believes that the Palestine case could be solved by settling the problems which were unresolved by the armistices of 1949, which ended the fighting between the Arabs and the Israelis. He takes it for granted that whatever has happened in Palestine since the Balfour Declaration of 1917 and until the armistice of 1949, has, rightly or wrongly, been accomplished and has been given the status of "fait accompli". He therefore begins his solution by asking :

"What are the principle <u>remaining</u> problems ?" In other words, Secretary Dulles is trying to treat the symptoms and not the cause of the ravaging disease.

I. The First Problem.

"The first problem is the tragic plight of the 900,000 refugees who formerly lived in the territory that is now occupied by Israel".

This is a grave statement. 900,000 human beings were uprooted from a territory in which they lived since the beginning of time to give place to some other people coming from all parts of the world.

Before going into the way Secretary Dulles deals with this problem, we would like to ask the U.S. Secretary of State one simple and elementary question which reflects on the devastating disease referred to above, and which has become the nightmare of the refugees since their evacuation :-

"Does Secretary Dulles think that it is fair and just for any cause whatsoever, Biblical or otherwise, for a people to come from outside - from Poland, Russia, Germany and from everywhere and take the homes and homeland of another people who have done the invaders no harm ?"

This question is continuously being asked by the Palestine Arab refugees, and to ask them to forget the past and accept the "fait accompli", would be asking something beyond human tolerance.

"To end the plight of the 900,000 refugees, requires that these uprooted people should, through resettlement and, to such an extent as may be feasible, repatriation .... There is need to create arable land where refugees can find permanent homes and gain their livelihood through their own work". This is what is suggested by Secretary Dulles as a solution to this problem.

Secretary Dulles undoubtedly means by this proposal that the greatest number of the refugees would have to resettle outside their homes and that the number of refugees who would be allowed to return to their homes would be determined by those who uprooted them. So far, the Israeli invador has refused to admit any.

The suggested solution advanced by Secretary Dulles is a direct violation of U.N. resolutions on repatriation of the refugees which give the choice of repatriation to the refugee. Two resolutions were adopted by the General Assembly to that effort. (Dec. 1948 and 14 Dec. 1950). As late as Nov. 26th 1954, Mr. Wardsworth of the U.S. Delegation to the U.N. made a verbal and a written declaration in the Ad Hoc Political Committee to the effect that the U.S. Government abides by U.N. resolutions with regard to the repatriation of refugees. Mr. Wardsworth made it very clear to the Committee in his written statement that the choice for return is the right of the refugee.

For the U.S. Government, the staunch pillar of that World Organization, to go back on its official declaration in the U.N., and to violate a resolution adopted on two occasions by the General Assembly, is undermining the charter of the U.N. and frustrating the Collective Security system destined to face what could be a common danger.

No doubt that the proposal suggested by Secretary Dulles to solve the Arab refugee problem has shaken the confidence of all the Arab people in what ever is being accomplished by the U.N. If doubts existed before, such retreats confirm them. The suggestion made by Secretary Dulles to review the

Jerusalem International Status which has been adopted by the General Assembly by an overwheling majority including the U.S.A. delegation, only increases these doubts in the U.S.A. as being a faithful member to the Organization it labored so hard to bring into being.

And what about our human rights to our homes ? In the Human Rights Declaration sponsored by the U.N., Article 13, para 2 says : "Every one has the right to leave any country including his own and to return to his country". And why shoukd the U.S. Government set a bad example in this case by trespassing over the right of the individual when it so heroicly upheld it under the strain of war in the case of the Corean prisoners of war.

Count Bernadotte, U.N. Mediator, who was assassinated at the hands of the Israelis, in his report to the U.N. said: "It is however, undeniable that no settlement can be just and complete if recognitetion is not accorded to the right of the Arab refugee to return to the home from which he has been dislodged".

The refugees, therefore, will never give up their right to their homes and homeland. All those who wish to return to their homes should be allowed to do so. Any delay in bringing this about, will only prolong the strife and bitterness in the area.

With regard to the loan for Israel suggested by Secretary Dulles to pay compensation for the refugees, the Palestine Arab refugees have no intention of liquidating their property in the territory now controled by Israel. Our property is still our property and we would like to keep it. With this in view, we have submitted to the Palestone Conciliation Commission, the body entrusted by the U.N. to look after the interests and property of the refugees, two memoranda, the one on the 15th July and the other in August 1955, in which we requested of the U.N. to take custodianship of our property in place of the Israeli custodian who has proved to be unworthy of his trust.

In his trustreship over our property, the Israeli custodian acted a dual part - the shrpherd and the wolf.

It is the earnest request of the refugees that the U.N., through the Palestine Conciliation Commission or any other U.N. subcommittee, take control of this property, maintain it, let it - not sell it - and give the net proceeds to the legitimate owners until such time as we may have control over it. If the question of property is temporarily settled in this manner, it will not be necessary for the U.S. Government and other nations to undergo the financial strain of raising a loan to Israel and would relieve the U.N. of some of its financial commitments to the refugees.

Compensation is due from Israel to those who wish to sell their property and do no wish to return to their homes. This does not include the territory designed in the 1947 partition scheme as Arab territory, or in the Jerusalem Corpus Seperatum which, legally, is now under the auspices of the Trusteeship Committee of U.N. In any event the question of compensation could not be discussed seperately, but as part of the scheme for general settlement.

II. <u>The Second Problem.</u>

The second problem to be settled in the opinion of the Secretary of State is the pall of fear that hangs over the Arabs and Israelis alike in the area.

It is quite true that the Arabs fear the existence of an aggressive state in their midst. This state, supported by world Jewry, has got its agents all over the world and possesses a network of propaganda centers that are unparallelel. It has political and economic influence over most of the big powers especially the U.S.A., Great Britain and France which the Arabs have always to rechon for. The violations and shortcomings in Secretary Dulles' Statement to solve the Palestine problem are in part due to Zionist political pressure and influence in the U.S.A. It is this political pressure and influence in Great Britain that made the greatest Empire at the time to send by force of arms nearly 600,000 Jewish immigrants into Palestine against the wishes of its indigenous population. The London Times, in its editorial of August 29, 1955, commenting on Secretary Dulles' Statement said: "Israel's existence was made possible by Britains power". Its maintenance is now made possible by the U.S.A. The adopted child of such a great country as the U.S.A. is to be feared.

The Arabs also know that the aspirations of the Israelis for expansion and domination is controled by the availability of force and the extent of foreign support they can get to make it legal. Their occupation at present of the Arab territory that extends beyond the 1947 partition bounderies is the best example of their technique. For this reason, the Arabs pay no heed to any Israeli offer for peace as they know it is made with the object of gaining recognition of present gains and preparing, under better circumstances, for new gains.

Lately however, the Israelis have began to fear Arab growing strength which might, one day, be able to give back to the original inhabitants of the country their homes and lands. They have become worried as all aggressors are. They have appealed to their stronghold, the U.S.A. which, we regret to say, was aften ready to help them, right or wrong.

To stop Israel's fears from Arab growing strength which is consistent with American Foreign Policy, Secretary Dulles suggested that a "decisive power", should be organized to maintain peace in the area. The unhealthy and deteriorating situation of the region has become insecure and even dangerous:- "Security can be assured only by collective measures which commit decisive power to the deterring of aggression" says Secretary Dulles in his Statement. This statement is no less than a verdict of the total failure of the sad experiments tried by Great Britain in the Balfour Declaration of 1917 and by the U.N. in the partition Scheme of 1947.

We Palestine Arab refugees do not believe in decisive power agreements in maintaning peace in the Middle East. Such agreements in Western Europe were responsible for the first and second world wars. "Peace cannot be left to the diplomat and the soldier, says President Eisenhower .... The cause of peace needs GOD" (Feb. 1955 issue of Readers' Digest - Our Prayers Could Change the World).

III. The Third Problem.

"The task of drawing permanent bounderies is admittedly one of difficulty. There is no single and sure guide, for each of two conflicting claims seem to have merit", says Secretary Dulles.

To find this single and sure guide, we have to go very briefly into the history of how these present temporary lines were reached.

Great Britain, the Mandatory power for Palestine for 30 years, in 1947, resigned her mandate to the U.N., stating that the Palestine mandate which incorporated the Jewish National Home policy, was unworkable.

For 30 years there was bloodshed and disturbances in Palestine. The 600,000 Jews brought in by British forces against the wishes of the indigenous population, have become too violent and would not cooperate with the 1¼ million Arab inhabitants of Palestine to form a democratic state. They wanted a state of their own.

The Arabs warned the U.N. that if a democratic state of all the population in Palestine was not established, the creation of a Jewish state would bring perpetual unrest and war in the whole area.

The U.N. however, under extreme pressure by the U.S.A., partitioned Palestine on the 29th November 1947. In this scheme of partition, just a little more than half of Palestine was given to the Zionist Jews and the rest was given to the Arab population - Moslem and Christian. The Jewish half included the coastal fertile plain and the well watered Tiberias and Huleh basin. The Arab part had less water and was more maountainous. To give the 650,000 Jewish new comers the better half of the land leaving to the Arab indigenous population who were twice as many, the less fertile part was an unjust deal by the newly organized U.N. whose Charter advocated justice and equality. The bias of the U.N. was too obvious and the U.S. Government played a big role in the adoption of this unjust resolution.

The Arabs also rejected the partition plan because they felt that the U.N. had no right to partition their country between them and another people who were brought in by force of arms and against their wishes. The U.N. did not have the jurisdiction to partition countries. The Jewish newcomers were only one third of the population and it was very undemocratic to enforce the scheme of partition against the wishes of the majority.

The Arabs rejected the scheme because they did not like to see Palestine, the land of inspiration for millions of people of the three faiths, torn into pieces and not only lose its sacred character, but actually become a battlefield.

The Arabs also rejected the scheme because they knew that it was unworkable and it would only bring perpetual unrest and war to the region. It is well to mention here that Great Britain, as the Mandatory Power trying to please the Zionists, adopted the plan of partition suggested by the Royal Commission that was sent in 1937 to Palestine to inquire into the disterbances that were raging in Palestine in that year. However, a year later the Woodhouse expert Commission declared it to be unworkable and Great Britain then had to abandon the scheme. For this reason, Great Britain, as member of the U.N. did not vote in favour of the partition scheme on the 29th Nov. 1947, in the General Assambly.

The 650,000 Jewish immigrants in Palestine, who possessed only 7% of the area of Palestine, would not accept to join with the indigenous population to form a democratic state in Palestine , which was the only way to have peace

in the area. They insisted on having a discriminate Jewish State: To obtain their goal, they had organized for many years past, military force and terrorist bands under the nose of the Mandatory Government; smuggling into the country huge ammounts of arms and ammunition. By force of arms, the Hagana, the Irgun and the Stern terrorist bands intimidated Great Britain and by the most savage methods as in Deir Yassin, Kufur Birim, King David Hotel atrocities, terrorised the defenseless Arab inhabitants to leave their homes and seek refuge in safer quarters. The Jewish illegal forces began to advance while the British were still in occupation before May 15, 1948. Had it not been for the intervention of the Arab States on the 15th May, 1948, the Arab Christian and Moslem population would have been subjected to the Nazi system of annihelation the Jews tried to immitate in Palestine. The well-known historian Arnold Toynbee in his "Study of history" says in this connection:-

> "In AD 1948 the Jews knew from personal experience, what they were doing! and it was their supreme tragedy that the lesson learnt by them from their encounter with the Nazi Germany gentiles should have been, not to eschew but to imitate some of the evil deeds that the Nazis have committed against the Jews"

Furthermore, we are certain that had it not been for the intervention of the Arab States, the Jewish Zionist forces would not have stopped at the present boundaries they now claim, but would have occupied the whole country, and they would have put the world, as they are doing now, before the "fait accompli."

To the Palestine Arab refugees, the two conflicting claims mentioned by Secretary Dulles are very clear. They are those of might and power politics on the one side and those of right on the other. We do not claim any boundaries in Palestine as we firmly believe that they should have never existed. If we ask now for the implimentation of the U.N. partition boundaries of 1947, it is not because we see justice restored to us in their implimentation, but an earnest desire on our part to find a possible solution to what seems to us to be an unworkable scheme. However, if the Israelis will change their hearts and attitude and will give up their love for possession, domination and religious discrimination, by implementing U.N. resolutions, a door may open for stability to prevail in the Middle East.

On the 12th May 1949, in Lauzanne, the Palestine Conciliation Commission and the representative of Israel signed an agreement known as the Lauzanne Protocol in which it is stated that Israel is willing to discuss with the Commission the Palestine Problem on the basis of U.N. resolution of 11th Dec. 1948. The "Working document" mentioned in the protocol is the U.N. partition plan of 1947 which would be taken as a basis for adjusting boundaries, repatriating refugees and protecting their rights and properties.

Because of the importance of this document, we record here below its full text:-

Record of a meeting between the Conciliation Commission
and the Delegation of Israel held at Lauzanne at
10.30 a.m. on 12 May 1949

Present

Mr. de Boisanger	(Chairman)	- France
Mr. Yalcin		- Turkey
Mr. Ethridge		- U.S.A.
Mr. Azcarate	(Principal Secretary)	
Dr. Walter Eytan		- Israel

In the course of this meeting the following protocol was signed by the delegate of Israel on the one hand and the members of the Conciliation Commission on the other.

Protocol

The U.N. Conciliation Commission for Palestine anxious to achieve as quickly as possible the objectives of the General Assembly's resolution of 11 December 1948, regarding refugees, the respect for their rights and the preservation of their property, as well as territorial and other questions, has proposed to the Delegation of Israel and to the delegations of the Arab States that the "Working documents" attached hereto be taken as a basis for discussions with the Commissions.

The interested Delegations have accepted this proposal with the understanding that the exchange of views will be carried on by the Commission with the two parties will bear upon the territorial adjustments necessary to the above indicated objectives.

Lausanne 12 May, 1949
Signed

Walter Eytan (Israel)

Claude de Boisanger (France Chairman)
Cahid Yalcin (Turkey)
Mark Ethridge (U.S.A.)

Conclusion

For 38 years, since the Balfour Declaration of 1917, the Palestine Problem has been the cause of trouble and unrest in the Middle East. The injustice inherent in the problem is very serious. Nearly one million Arab refugees are prohibited from going back to their homes simply because they do not belong to the Jewish faith. The creation of a State based on religious discrimination was a dangerous experiment in the religiously sensitive Middle East.

This experiment has definetely failed and perpetual war has been the result.

The proposal suggested by Secretary Dulles that security be assured only by collective measures which commit deciisve power to the detering of aggression, we, the Palestine Arab refugees are convinced that it will also fail, as it is a palliative measure. Only by dealing justice to the Arab inhabitants of Palestine and restoring to them their rights in their own country will peace reign in the Middle East.

September 12th 1955

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